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Czech Republic

Livestock and Products

SVA Confirms Sixth and Seventh Cases of BSE 2003

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Report Highlights:

On October 27, the Czech State Veterinary Administration (SVA) confirmed the seventh case of BSE in the Czech Republic. This case followed on the heels of an earlier confirmed case on October 22. SVA officials speak carefully about 'contamination or other cattle feed production and distribution imperfections. Contamination was probably introduced in either milk replacements for calves or through mixed cattle feed

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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On October 27, the Czech State Veterinary Administration (SVA) confirmed the seventh case of BSE. The case occurred in a cow from Lomnice and Popelkou (Northern Bohemia, region Liberec) that was born February 5, 2000. This was the first time that an infected animal was not born between 1995 and 1997 when all other infected animals were born. BSE was confirmed after two positive Western Blot tests and by the immunohistochemical method. It is not known yet how many head of cattle will have to be destroyed and tested.

This case followed on the heels of an earlier confirmed case on October 22. In this incidence, the SVA confirmed BSE in a cow from a farm in Zablati (Southern Bohemia, district Prachatice). Like the previously confirmed cases, the cow had no clinical symptoms of BSE and was born between 1995 and 1997. In this incidence, BSE was confirmed by two consecutive Western Blot tests and by a test using the immunohistochemical method. The cow had 4 offspring with 3 still living. Interesting is that the farm is an 'organic' operation, mainly producing beef cattle. The Association of organic farmers, Pro-Bio, as well as the SVA are working to uncover relevant information and details concerning the animal.

SVA officials are speaking carefully about the possibility of 'contamination or other imperfections in cattle feed production and/or distribution'. The contamination was probably introduced in either milk replacements for calves or through mixed cattle feed.

Five previous cases of BSE occurred in the Czech Republic June 2001, September 2001, October 2002 (third and fourth), and May 2003. Since February 2001, the SVA has tested over 460,000 heads of cattle. All slaughtered cattle over 30 months of age are now tested including all suspicious animals with neurological symptoms.

Presently, there is no ban affecting trade with cattle and beef from the EU except for meat bone meal (MBM) from ruminants and their derivatives. MBM was banned for use in feed mixtures for cattle in 1997. As of November 2003, MBM will be prohibited from use in any kind of feed mixture including feeds for swine and poultry. The system of BSE testing and connected measures provide a good level of assurance to consumers that they are adequately protected against purchasing meat from a BSE infected animal. Still, it is too early to say whether or not the recent string of BSE outbreaks will affect beef demand.